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The Doctrines of the Democratic and Abolition Parties Contrasted.—Negro Equality.—The Conflict between "Higher Law" and the Law of the Land.

S P E E C H

OF

HON. JEREMIAH S. BLACK,

At the Hall of the Keystone Club, in Philadelphia,

OCTOBER 24, 1864.

Judge Black began by saying that he would promise the audience no amusing entertainment. These were serious times, and he would give some of the grave reasons which made him believe that the security of individual rights and the safety of the country itself from utter destruction, depended on the election of General McClellan.

Political contests, he proceeded to say, are not what they used to be. In former times we contended on points of policy on which we supposed the interest of the country depended more or less; now our opponents themselves tell us that the life of the Government hangs on the issue. They are right. The life of this Government is the liberty of the people, and if they succeed in destroying liberty, the Government will be dead—dead without even the hope of resurrection to a future life.

The enemy we now have to contend against is the Abolition party; that body of which the original nucleus was a little gang in New England, who met periodically to curse the Constitution and blaspheme the Christian religion. It was small at first; but it has since grown with such portentous rapidity that its influence now overshadows this whole continent. There

was another organization which, for a brief while professed to be acting in concert with the Abolitionists while faintly disapproving their principles. But the fusion has become perfect—the whole of the coalition, from the crown to the bottom, is thoroughly saturated with Abolition doctrine. But Republican now dares to dissent from the measures. Abolitionism is omnipotent in Congress; it controls the Executive with absolute sway—it commands an army whose numbers are counted by hundreds of thousands—it is preying at will upon the prostrate body of the nation. We must look fairly into the face of that party if we wish to see the features of our enemy.

Between that party and the Democratic party there exists such a diversity of sentiment, opinion and principle, as never before separated men in any country or any age of the world. We dissent from them and they from us, upon every political subject—in every question of fundamental law that ever was raised, and upon very many which were never considered debatable by any body but themselves. There is not a sentence, line or letter in the Constitution, from the words "We the people," at the beginning of the preamble, down to the signature of "George

Washington," at the foot of the instrument, which they have not either construed away altogether, or else put upon it some interpretation entirely new and totally at variance with that which we always supposed to be the true one.

We are as wide asunder as the poles of the earth. John Hampden did not differ so much from Charles I. nor William Tell from Gessler, nor the Congress of 1776 from the ministry of George the Third. Nay; the most orderly, humane and anti-revolutionary Frenchman that inhabited Paris in 1789, could not have differed from Robespierre about the use of the guillotine, more entirely than we differ from the Abolitionists concerning the whole purpose and object of the Federal Government.

They are not opposed merely to the views held by us, their present antagonists; they are equally hostile to all the opinions entertained by the public men who preceded them. The principles of Administration which they have introduced have been denounced and utterly repudiated by all the statesmen who ever held office under the Federal Government, from the beginning of Washington's time to the end of Buchanan's. If the Abolitionists are right, then our whole history is but the record of one great blunder; and all the men who had any connection with the Government, previous to 1861, were "fools as gross as ever ignorance made drunk." No two political systems, framed for different countries or for different times, have ever been more dissimilar than the Government of the United States as administered before 1861 and the same Government as administered since that time. Let us look, for a moment, at some of the points:

The Abolition theories which concern the relations of the States to the General Government and to one another, confound all our preconceived ideas upon that subject. We supposed the United States to be a federative system, created by sovereign States, for the simple and sole purpose of watching over their common defense and general welfare. To that end, jurisdiction was given to the Federal Government over certain plainly specified classes of objects, and every other species of power was expressly withheld. It was a political corporation strictly limited by its charter. It was not only agreed, but sworn to, that the affairs of each State should be controlled by its own will. Whether the States should use this right properly or improperly, wisely or unwisely, was, in our opinion, nobody's business but their own. By the unequivocal terms of the compact they had a right to make their local laws bad or good, just as they pleased, and it is as well known as any fact in history that the Union could not have been made on any other terms.

But, the Abolitionists deny this vital principle so bitterly and so violently that every citizen, who presumes to hold, is, in their estimation, a traitor. The great characteristic of their creed is the claim they make for the people of one section to control the other in their local affairs. They hold it to be not only the right, but the bounden duty of the Federal Government to dictate to the States

their whole system of domestic administration. This is so clear in their opinion that any State which refuses to modify its local laws when commanded to do so by the President, is guilty of the most awful crime that man can commit; a crime for which the contumacious State deserves to be punished by having its fields laid waste, its towns burnt, its men butchered, its women and children driven houseless, homeless and starving into the woods. And it is announced upon the highest authority among them—the chief of their party, himself—that this awful scourge of war is not to be discontinued until the States now subjected to it, shall abandon the laws approved by themselves and adopt others which are more to the liking of the President and the party which supports him in other States. To show how emphatic and thorough their contempt is for our doctrine of State Rights, they think it perfectly proper to tear a sovereign State into pieces by main force and cast the bleeding parts to enemies and strangers, whilst they are yet warm and quivering with the agony of the separation. If one-tenth of the voters in a State shall feel or feign belief in this doctrine, that shall be a saving faith for which the small minority is to be rewarded by giving them absolute and uncontrolled dominion over the lives, liberties and property of the other nine-tenths, who cannot see it in the same way. Submission to the General Government in all things is not merely a condition of peace with the States already at war; coercion for the same purpose is extended to States in which there is no war, legal or actual. In Maryland, for example, a decree has been made that the State Government shall be wholly revolutionized. Four-fifths of the people are, without doubt, opposed to the change, but by means of brute force, and a system of test-oaths, prescribed at Washington, the State Government is entirely taken out of the people's hands, and all political power put into the keeping of not only a small, but a venal and false minority, which alone is permitted to vote. This is not a republican Government, but to all intents and purposes an aristocracy, the Government of a few, and it will not be the fault of the system if it does not turn out to be an aristocracy of hypocrites and thieves. The effect of this contempt for State rights, is seen, not only in Southern States, or States on the borders of the South. In Pennsylvania last year, and only a few days ago in Indiana, companies, battalions, and regiments of Federal soldiers, without a pretense of right, poured their votes into the ballot-box to overwhelm the true voice of the people at a State election.

Such is the contrast between us on one subject. There is another upon which the divergency of our views is equally striking. It happens, by the permission of God's providence, that two distinct races of human beings have been thrown together on this continent. All the mental characteristics as well as the physical features and color of one race, make it lower in the scale of creation than the

other. I need not say how much lower, for I suppose there is no man here who does not know the difference between a white man and a negro. The negroes themselves are perfectly conscious of their inferiority; nobody but an Abolitionist ever thinks of denying it. The white men asserted their supremacy in this country, as they did every where else in the world. They founded a nation, and framed a government to be controlled exclusively by themselves and their own posterity. They agreed, because it pleased them to do so, that they would share their privileges upon certain conditions with other persons of Caucasian blood who might settle among them, but they were not bound to take Tartars, Mongols, Chinese or Negroes into their political partnership, and they declared that they never would. They claimed, (somewhat proudly it may be,) their old and hard-won right of domination, and gave the negro—not political power, or the right of ruling—but only such protection and kindness as were due, in a government of laws, to a subject and inferior race.

The Abolitionists look upon all this with perfect horror. They assert everywhere, in season and out of season, the natural right of the negro to political, legal and social equality. Their theories of miscegenation are too disgusting to be mentioned. Even by men in high authority, negroes are insultingly preferred to white men. The Attorney General has decided (conscientiously, no doubt) that negroes are citizens—a part of the Government—and therefore capable of holding office and exercising public authority over us, as, in point of fact, many of them do at this moment. In the States thoroughly abolitionized they are allowed to vote, and the votes of negroes added to the votes of white men with negro principles, can trample down the true white man who is faithful to the rights of his race. Not content with doing this in their own States, they extend their process of equalization into other States, where they use what they call the war power, to rob the white man of his property, and bestow it on the negro. In all their measures, military and civil, in the new Territories and the old States, you see this pervading principle at work, stripping white men of the rights, inherited from their ancestors, and clothing negroes with powers and privileges they never possessed before.

Now, if the African race could be elevated so as to make it, in fact and in truth, the equal of the white race, then we would lose nothing by the proposed equality of the two. But that is not possible, and our opponents know it as well as we do. A negro will still be a negro in spite of proclamations. You can degrade the white man to the level of the negro—that is easily done—but you cannot lift the negro up to the white man's place. All close and intimate connexion, political or social, tending to produce equality between two nations or races naturally differing from one another, has the effect of levelling, not upward but downward; and the degradation of the superior nation does not stop even at the point originally occupied

by the lower one—the amalgam has all the vice and weakness of both, without the strength or the virtue of either. What would have been the history of this continent if its white inhabitants had gone down to the level of the negroes two hundred years ago? And what will be its future history if we now submit to the same degradation? Respect for the memory of our ancestors; fidelity to the rights of our children; our own interests and the interests of the civilized world, require us to keep and maintain this Government in the hands of white men, and to repudiate with abhorrence every measure which is calculated to bring upon us the shame and the infamy of a voluntary descent to negro equality.

Again: the Democratic party believes in law and order—in the regular administration of justice by properly appointed tribunals—in trial by jury and the great writ of *habeas corpus*. We knew very well how sadly the people must suffer without these inestimable institutions. We had read in the history of other countries how men were murdered, and robbed and kidnapped for the want of them; and when we saw in our own Constitution a provision that no man should be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law, we were sure that we understood the full meaning, and appreciated the mighty value of those sublime though simple words.

But, according to our opponents, we were utterly wrong. Their chief law officer has told us not only that the President, without any process of law, may order a citizen to be arrested whenever he pleases, but he may delegate the power to others, and they to others again, until all the favorites and minions of the Administration shall have unlimited control over all who presume to doubt its infallibility; and this power to deprive freemen of their liberty to be accompanied with the power of suspending the privilege of *habeas corpus*, and of abrogating at the same time all other laws which might afford their victim a chance of redress. This is not a mere abstract theory of the Abolitionists; they have practiced upon it to such an appalling extent, that more innocent persons have been kidnapped and shut up in prison during three years of their rule than all the sycophants, and strumpets, and spies about the Court of Louis XIV. could induce him to send to the Bastille in the whole of his long and cruel reign.

If any privilege was guaranteed to the American people we supposed it to be the right of discussing public affairs by means of free speech and a free press. But here, again, the antagonism is perfect. Abolitionism has suppressed two hundred and fifty newspapers (I think that is the number) by arbitrary orders, executed at the point of the bayonet, or by mobs hissed on to their brutal work by the general approbation of the whole party.

Perhaps, the most curious of all their notions, is, that the Constitution is binding at some times, and at others is a mere dead letter; their oath to support it is to be kept on certain occasions, but disregarded whenever it confines their powers within limits which they think inconveniently narrow. The application of this principle is worse, if possible,

than the principle itself, for they withdraw the protection of the fundamental law at the very moment when the safety of the people most imperiously requires it. When civil war breaks out—when political rancor becomes fiercest—when party rage runs highest—when aggressions upon life, liberty, and property are most likely to occur—then it is that they remove all legal restraints from the bad passions of men. What seems worse yet, they hold that an insurrection in one State abrogates the Constitution in another, which is five hundred miles off, and perfectly peaceable. As yet, they have tried this upon us only in time of war, but all their arguments would fit just as well for peace. If a war policy may be supported by kidnapping citizens and suppressing newspapers, what is to hinder a peace policy from being sustained in the same way? Surely, no sane man will pretend that it is not as necessary to preserve the peace, as it is to prolong a war.

For the system of laws which our forefathers made and gave to us, they substitute that "necessity" which the common judgment and common sense of mankind in all ages and countries has branded with odium as "the tyrant's plea." No despot ever asked for power to do more than what he might decide to be necessary, and nothing more is needed to warrant the most infamous outrages. When Charles I deliberately perjured himself, he said, and said truly enough, that political necessities, created by a civil war, had driven him to it. When Cromwell devoted all the inhabitants of Drogheda, men, women and children, to indiscriminate butchery, necessity was the plea upon which he justified his brutal order, and when he drove the Parliament of England out of their places, it was not, as he said, because "the Lord had no further need of them," but because the needs of his own tyrannical rule required their absence and the overthrow of their just authority. When Nero threw the Christians into the arena to be devoured by wild beasts; when he commanded them to be sawed asunder, to be sewed up in sacks and cast into the Tiber, or to be covered with pitch and then burnt together in great piles, he and all his loyal supporters pronounced it to be necessary; for Christianity was, in their eyes, "a pestilent superstition" which might give serious trouble to the power of the Cæsars. Before that time Herod of Judea had heard that a child was born in Bethlehem, who would one day be King of the Jews; and he believed that his government could not live unless that child was destroyed. But, neither he nor any of his provost marshals knew exactly what child it was, and that created the necessity of killing them all. The decree went forth, and it was no doubt executed with all proper zeal and right loyal devotion. There was lamentation and weeping and woe in Rama—Rachel mourned for her children and would not be comforted, because they were not. But if Rachel had been an Abolition woman, she would no doubt have been very greatly comforted by considering that the slaughter

of the innocents was "necessary to preserve the life of the Government." Our fathers said that no such power as this should be wielded here by any mortal man. They declared that all public necessities should be determined by the law. They defined the offenses which it was necessary to punish—the evidence that should be required to convict—the tribunals that should weigh the proof—the form of the trial, and the quantum of the penalty. Then they decreed that all their officers should take a solemn oath, to be registered in Heaven's chancery, never to know any kind of necessity but the one great supreme necessity of obedience to the laws.

In our view the Government of this country is the Constitution and laws; whosoever sustains them most faithfully is the best and truest supporter of the Government. But Abolitionism introduces another standard of morality. Acquiescence in the violation of law is with them the grand test of patriotism, and every citizen who has such a weakness for the old system of law as to complain of an officer for tramping it under foot, is guilty of what they call "treasonable language" or "disloyal practices."

We were, and are, in favor of a strong government—that is, a strong Constitution and strong laws. During the period of Democratic ascendancy the Government, in that sense, was powerful enough to shield every American citizen from every species of wrong. It brought security to his fire-side, spread its guardianship around him wherever he went, and, like a protecting angel, it hovered over him and watched him while he slept. Now it is so weak, contemptible and powerless that it cannot save the most upright man or the most virtuous woman from being kidnapped even by its own officers at any hour of the day or night.

This wide antagonism of principle carried out in measures so aggressive upon public liberty, produces the moral effect which might be expected. Political institutions so administered cannot have the love of the people who are oppressed by them. Those who rule in this fashion will infallibly find themselves where Macbeth was in his clauage. Terrorism may quiet many, and the venaal can always be bought, but those things which should accompany a free government,

"As honor, love, obedience, troops of friends
It must not look to have; but in their stead
Curses not loud, but deep, mouth honor, breath,
Which the poor heart would fain deny, but dare not."

The indignation which swells up in the great soul of the American Democracy may be easily allayed; but not so the animosity that rankles in the minds of our enemies. It is easy for a magnanimous people to suffer and forgive, but "they never pardon who have done the wrong." The Abolitionists hate us with all their strength, and all their souls; and they give expression to that sentiment in language perfectly unequivocal. One of their leading Senators, in a speech at Washington, advocated the introduction there of the treatment which

the opponents of the Administration received in Kansas, namely, to shoot them down. Another declared on the floor of the Senate, itself, when speaking of certain men who had been unlawfully arrested, and kept in prison for upwards of a year, that, in his opinion, they were dealt with only too mildly, and if he had been allowed to have his way he would have hanged them; in other words, he would not only have kidnapped them, but he would have murdered them into the bargain. An admiral of the navy, born in Connecticut, publicly expressed his willingness to turn the arms of his men, if necessary, against the people of his native State. The occasion: which brought this forth was a pending election in the State of Connecticut at which the people were making an effort to choose a Governor of their own by the reasonable means of voting for him at the polls. The General-in-Chief of the army, (Halleck,) in a letter deliberately written for publication, asserted that the army would crush the southern rebellion first and then put its heel on "the copperheads of the North." A new species of eloquence has been introduced into nearly all their public discussions. Democrats are constantly reminded that they should be thankful for the mercy which has let them live so long. It is not *persuasion* that hangs upon the lips of their orators; they bring down the cheers of their audience by the visions they paint of ropes, gibbets, and daggers, and when one of them announces that all Democrats are traitors, and he longs to put the knife up to the handle in the heart of every traitor, the sentiment is echoed by a deafening shout. Even the ministers (or those who call themselves ministers) of the Christian religion are suborned into the service of this ferocious Moloch. Christ said that every professed follower of his, who hated his brother, gave conclusive evidence that he was a liar and a murderer. But the Abolition preachers—"those hireling wolves, whose gospel is their maw"—are not ashamed to avow the most intense malignity against all who differ from them. They make their conventicles ring with demands for the extermination of men, women, and children, by millions, through half a continent, and even the sacred office of prayer, as they conduct it, becomes a long howl for blood.

Is it any wonder that under the rule of such a party, all the joints of society should be dislocated? They have hopelessly divided the country, not geographically, but morally—they have not sundered the territory, but they have cloven the heart of the nation in two. The limits by which they have separated us, is not any natural boundary, but a boundary created by the sentiments which they have forced between us—not the Potomac, the Ohio, and the Mississippi, but the far more impassable streams, which, according to Milton, water the dreary abode of the damned:

"Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly HATE,
Sad Acheron of sorrow, black and deep—
Cocytus named of LAMENTATION, low.,

Heard on the rueful stream; fierce Phlegethon!
Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage."

It is perfectly manifest that the principles and measures of the Abolitionists are, and must of necessity be, incompatible with the safety of a government like ours. They put it to a work which it was not intended for, and which it cannot do without destroying itself. If you have a threshing machine and place it under the charge of a man who uses it as a breaker of anthracite coal, it must infallibly fly to pieces. So the operations of your political system must be confined to the purposes designed by its framers, or else you must take the inevitable consequence of breaking it up. The more exquisitely the several parts of it are adapted to its one legitimate purpose, the more certain it is to be utterly ruined by applying it to another. Nor does it make any difference whether the new object proposed be in itself good or bad. Indeed, any government, however constituted, is perfectly sure to wreck those laws which are the essential parts of its structure, whenever it attempts to work out the object of some "higher law," which does not properly belong to it.

All the pages of history are covered with lessons which teach this truth. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the rulers of Europe took it into their heads that the great paramount interest which they must look after was the spiritual welfare of the people; their temporal prosperity was nothing compared to their eternal salvation. They resolved, therefore, to introduce into their governments the Higher Law of true religion. But what came of it? The Higher Law trampled down all other laws, and tore the whole framework of society into fragments. Rebellion, insurrection and civil war became the universal fashion—millions were slaughtered; France was convulsed; Germany was laid waste and almost depopulated; the city of Prague, which began the thirty years' war with two hundred thousand inhabitants, closed it with less than four hundred human beings inside of her walls. All the land in Ireland was confiscated four times over, and for ages together generation after generation of her best and bravest men were ruthlessly murdered. England offered no terms of peace except upon the abandonment of the Catholic faith, which the Higher Law pronounced to be false. But though Ireland was many times conquered; was trampled down again and again, subjugation brought no peace; it was only civil war gone to seed. Peace and security, and justice and order never came back until England slowly opened her eyes to the truth, and acknowledged that the whole doctrine of the Higher Law was a great, unmitigated, monstrous, bloody lie.

We have had some experience with this same kind of Higher Law in our own country. Ten or twelve years ago certain Yankee politicians, and their humble imitators in other parts of the Union, forming together a very powerful party, proposed the practical disfranchisement of Catholics and foreign-born citizens. In place of the Constitution they wanted

the Higher Law of a Protestant and exclusively native domination. New England pretended to be in an agony of terror, lest the Pope and the Catholic church would do her some grievous harm; every member of the Massachusetts Legislature but one, was sworn in secret to support the Higher Law; a lying priesthood hounded on the ignorant crowd, just as they are doing now; churches were burned; nunneries were assaulted; Catholics were driven from the polls and run through with pitchforks. If that party had got hold of the Federal Government, as it seemed at one time very likely to do, and put its Higher Law in full operation, civil war would have been as certain as it is now.

You can easily conceive how other applications of the principle would work in any given case. For instance: The municipal law of all our States has the protection of private property for one of its great objects; it allows the rich man to keep what he has, and poverty is forced to be content with its 'loop'd and windowed raggedness.' But the Higher Law of Christian charity commands the rich to divide with the poor. It is, besides, a great public evil, unjust and unnatural, that one person should be compelled to struggle for the bare necessities of life, while another, no better than he, is rolling in the luxuries of superfluous wealth. But suppose we were visited by an act of Congress, or an Executive proclamation in favor of the Higher Law, backed by an army with banners, to enforce an equal division of goods and lands, can any body doubt that civil commotion would be the consequence? The foundations of order would be broken up; the rich would refuse to part with the half of their property; the poor would think themselves licensed to plunder it all, and the agents of the Higher Law would do as they have done elsewhere; rob both classes alike.

Apply these plain and simple principles to Abolitionism. In doing so let us concede that party to be (what it is not) orthodox on every subject but that of African slavery. Assume, also, that the relation of master and servant, in the Southern States, is wrong morally and religiously. Nevertheless, it is a "fixed constitutional fact," that the United States are furnished with no legal power to interfere with it; and any attempt by them to do so is *ipso facto* destruction of the Federal Government, for while it is engaged in the execution of the Higher Law it cannot perform the proper functions actually assigned to it by those who made it. We are therefore without a Government; anarchy spoliation and bloodshed, conflagration, terror and tears, come in the place of Government and law.

Every one who reflects will admit, that if this perversion of the Government to the purposes of Abolitionism, or any other purpose inconsistent with its laws, had taken place at a former period, or under an earlier President, the same disastrous consequences must have followed. The time never was when we could run our vessel on such a rock as that without making it a total wreck. Nor is there a single man, with understanding enough to raise him

one degree higher than an idiot, who does not know, that if a Democrat had been elected when Mr. Lincoln was, the career of the country would still have been onward and upward; as free, united and glorious as ever.

It is clear beyond possible doubt, that the American people had their choice in 1860 between the government of their fathers, with continued peace and prosperity on one hand, and on the other a Higher Law inconsistent with the Government, accompanied by a train of devilish horrors. It was blind folly to expect that the law and the Higher Law would reign together; for Higher Law will "bear no brother near the throne." Its mission is to tread down whatever opposes it. In every age, and in all countries, it has been intolerant, dogmatic, demoniac in temper, inexorable in its demands, reckless of all restraint and ever ready to carry its ends by moral force. It disdains all compromise—it carries no olive branch—it takes both hands to wield its merciless sword. It makes its appearance on every theatre of its action with threats of slaughter; it put on the port of Mars,

"And at its heels

Leashed in like hounds, fire, sword, and famine
Crouch for employment."

Our present experience is enough, and more than enough, to prove all this. While the Federal Government was administered according to its own laws, and while its existence was threatened with no serious danger of Higher Law, our country was prosperous beyond example. Her ways were ways of pleasantness, and all her paths were peace. When the Abolitionists came into power, disaster, disgrace and discord came with them; and final ruin fiercely drove her plough share through the nation. By their fruits ye shall know them.

But we ought to have known this without learning it in the dear school of experience. We were sufficiently warned. Every statesman of all parties and sections who had a hand in making the Government, told us that it would last so long, and so long only, as it was confined to the proper and legitimate purpose for which they intended it. We were told, not by the Democracy only, but by the chiefs of the great party opposed to us, that the success of Abolitionism would be fatal to the Union, and peace of the nation. Moreover, the Abolitionists themselves did not deny that the overthrow of our political system was their object; their express purpose, their deliberate aim.— Their chief priests declared that they could reach their purpose only by marching over the ruins of the Federal Government and the Christian Church. The greatest of their orators claimed it as his highest honor that he was not only an infidel to the religion, but a traitor to the Constitution of his country. One of their principal newspaper organs habitually denounced the Federal compact as a covenant with

*Impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer;
Jura negat sibi nata; nihil non arrogat armis.
[Horace.]

hell, while another maligned the flag of the Union as the emblem of a lie. Another shining light of the party gave a practical exposition of its creed. He was a coarse, low ruffian, who for years had followed no business but that of a horse thief, and he had committed many base and treacherous murders in the Western country. He went to Canada, and there, with a few confederates, he planned a conspiracy to overthrow the Federal Government and conquer the States, an enterprise in which he hoped to succeed mainly by organizing among the negroes a general system for the butchery of their masters. He sneaked into a peaceful Virginia town, and at midnight began to put the Higher Law in force by stealing the public property and shooting down the unarmed and defenceless people.—He was taken and hanged; but it seldom happens that the greatest benefactors of the human race receive such posthumous honors as the Abolitionists bestowed on John Brown. They amounted almost to an apotheosis. From poets and orators, from clergymen and politicians, from senators, governors and statesmen of every class, from primary meetings and legislative bodies, the expressions of admiration and sympathy were boundless. Ever since that time, the most popular music they have, consists of hymns to his memory, and hallelujahs to his great name. Whence came all this ecstatic reverence for the character of such a man? It was not given because he was a murderer; other men have committed murders without being worshiped for it. It was not merely because he was a thief, for they have among them many others, who have stolen on a far more magnificent scale than he did. No, they loved him because he was like themselves, a deadly enemy to the Government, Constitution, and laws of the land; because he was the boldest apostle, and the earliest martyr of that Higher Law, which was destined to work out our political ruin. In their estimation he was a greater man than President Lincoln himself, because he preceded Mr. Lincoln with a 'proclamation of freedom,' and besides it came out of him without any 'pressure.' It may be said that I am citing the words and acts only of their ultra men. Take then the utterances of the most moderate among them; the careful, sober minded, reflective Secretary of State. 'He has many times avowed his devotion to the Higher Law, and a speech of his in Massachusetts, during the canvass of 1860, pledged Mr. Lincoln as a disciple of the same school. Did he misunderstand the destructive tendency of Higher Law? Did he mean peace and union and the harmony of the States? No; in his Rochester speech, he told us truly what would be the effect of his doctrine—'an irrepressible conflict between the opposing and enduring forces' of the North and the South, which conflict of force was to last until the Higher Law of one section should put the legal rights of the other under its feet.

Now, after all the solemn warnings we received from all the great statesmen of the country, that Abolitionism would be fatal to our peace, and after

we had heard the admissions of their own leaders, that it was their very purpose and design not to administer the Government, but to destroy it, what right have we to be astonished at the prodigious ruin which surrounds us? We may lament it, indeed, but not with amazement, for it came in the natural course and sequence of things.

But are these calamities of so long a life that they must have no end? Is there no chance of restoration? The answer is that our hope depends on the number of votes we poll for George B. McClellan on the 8th of November. As long as the Abolitionists remain in power they will press the Higher Law and we can have no order or justice. But McClellan has said that he will make the Constitution the guide to his path and the lamp to his feet. If he is elected he will also swear to preserve, protect and defend that sacred instrument against all opposers, come from what quarter they may. Those who know him have no shadow of doubt that he will faithfully keep and perform his solemn covenant with God and the country. He is not the man to play fast and loose with his oath. Then the Higher Law will give place to the law of the land. I am as thoroughly and profoundly convinced now, that peace and Union will be the result of McClellan's election as I was four years ago that disunion and civil war would be the consequence of Lincoln's.

But if the South, after all their rights are conceded, should still refuse to perform their duties, then the coercive power of military force will be legitimately, fairly and most effectually exerted to compel them. I am not only no believer in the right of secession, but I go further than even an Abolitionist would ask me to go. I deny the right of revolution. No sound man can adopt the heresy announced by Mr. Lincoln when he was a member of Congress, that any portion of the people can overthrow the authority of the established government merely because they are dissatisfied with it and desire a change. Resistance to mere usurpation is of course another thing—not revolution but the direct reverse. That divine revelation is true which pronounces all rebellion against lawful government to be as the sin of witchcraft. No Government can consent—no constitutional ruler has a right to consent—that the empire under his authority shall be dismembered.

But a war for this purpose, if war there must be, under General McClellan, would be conducted with an object, and that object would be the simple restoration of the laws to their just supremacy. Its character, as well as its object, would be changed, and the brutal atrocities which have disgraced us in the eyes of the civilized world, would be wholly discontinued.

Indeed, there is no subject on which the characteristic difference between Democrats and Abolitionists displays itself more clearly than on this question: 'How shall an insurrection or a rebellion against the laws and Government of the Union be dealt with?' Both the parties have had an opportunity to put their views on record, and both have given an

official exposition of their respective creeds. Perhaps I have some special knowledge of the way it was done on our side.

Abolition and secession began to make their mutual preparations for an irrepressible conflict before the close of the last Administration. Of course, we said to the former that they ought to concede to the Southern States all their legal rights, and that peace, though possible, was not probable on any other terms. I speak what I do know when I say that, if the President elect and his party had given an express assurance and safe pledges to govern according to the Constitution, and on all disputed points to be guided by the exposition of the proper judicial authority, there would and could have been no war. But they refused this flatly and defiantly, and even went so far as to have their refusal inserted in the inaugural speech.

To the South we said that secession was no remedy for any evil, actual or apprehended—that a division of the country was an unendurable wrong to us—that they were bound to fight out their battle against Higher Law inside of the Union, with the vantage ground of the Constitution in their favor. We held that secession was a nullity, and the Federal Government was as much bound to execute its laws after secession as before, and that if any considerable number of persons would oppose the laws by force, the military power not only might lawfully, but must necessarily, be used to put down such opposition.

But we declared that the General Government was sovereign within its sphere—directly sovereign—and acted upon individuals, not upon States. In executing the laws, State lines were no more to be regarded than county lines in the execution of State laws. Therefore, the force that sustained the laws, must be directed against the force that opposed them, and the individual insurgents were personally responsible for any insurrection—not the State in its corporate capacity. We repudiated utterly the whole idea that war could be declared by the President, or by Congress, against a State. We had no right, authority or power to put all the people of a State into the attitude of public enemies merely because some persons within the State had done or threatened to do certain things inconsistent with their Federal obligations. On the contrary, the innocent people—those who were no way concerned in the rising—were as much entitled to the protection of the Federal Government as if they lived in any other State, and in fact had a stronger claim to it, for they might need it much more.

This view was not only faultless in theory and unanswerable in reason and law—and no answer to it was ever attempted—but it was practically a point of the most transcendent importance that ever was submitted to the judgment of any human being. It is perfectly certain that nine-tenths of the people of the Southern States, take them by and large, from the Potomac to the Gulf, were devotedly attached to the Union. Mr. Lincoln, four months after his

inauguration declared, in a message to Congress, that there was not a majority for secession in any State except, perhaps, South Carolina. Yet war was made on the States, and the innocent were confounded with the guilty—the friends of the Union were compelled, in self-defense, to unite with its enemies, and now, instead of dealing with a tenth of the people, we have a deadly and terrific conflict with all of them. They are not only unanimous against us, but driven to desperation, and maddened by the most brutal outrages on their property, persons, and families. The Abolitionists said that the South could not be kicked out of the Union, and, as to the majority, they were probably right; but they certainly succeeded in driving them out with the bayonet, the cannon ball, and the torch.

Let me illustrate this by an analogous case, which very nearly happened in Pennsylvania. The public authorities of Pittsburgh and Allegheny county borrowed a large sum of money, amounting to millions, and gave their bonds for it, with the full and unreserved approbation of the whole people. After they used the money for their purposes they were called on to pay an instalment of interest, which they refused, and announced their determination to repudiate the debt. The Commissioners, the City Councils, and a large party took measures to resist payment with all the force at their command. This was not only an act of gross dishonesty, but it was flat rebellion against the laws and Government of the State. What did the State do? It arrested the wrong doers, imprisoned the Commissioners and the Councils. If a force of repudiators had been organized to resist the legal process, the State troops might have been called out to meet it and quell the insurrection. But if the Governor had made a proclamation of war against the whole county, ordered their crops to be destroyed, their mills, houses and barns to be burnt, their towns and cities to be sacked, they would soon have forgotten the original quarrel—all would have united in one effort for mutual defense—and even outside of the county Democratic traitors might have been found base enough to sympathise with a community so harshly and hardly used. I defy all human ingenuity to show me a reason, founded on law, policy or humanity, for making a distinction between rebellion against the State in a county, and rebellion against the Government of the Union in a State.

But, my fellow citizens, I have detained you too long. I have but one thing to say before I conclude. Mr. Lincoln has committed two great offenses against the country—the removal of the Constitution and the removal of McClellan—he retired them both. The citizens acted under the orders of the Constitution as the army fought under the command of McClellan, unitedly, promptly, cheerfully, with one heart and one mind. Now, we say of the Constitution, as the army says of its General, "Give us back our Old Commander!" And we couple these demands together, because the restoration of one will be the restoration of both.

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